



News Release

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IRS.gov USE HITS RECORD LEVELS

WASHINGTON – Taxpayers have made IRS.gov the Internet's most visited resource for tax forms, refund information and free electronic filing, with more than 1.4 billion hits and more than 195 million forms and publications downloaded so far this filing season.

Two of the hottest features on IRS.gov, www.irs.gov, are the "Where's My Refund?" service and Free File, the public-private partnership that offers free e-filing and tax preparation for eligible taxpayers. Taxpayers used the "Where's My Refund?" service more than 4.5 million times in February to search for the status of their refund and more than a million tax returns have been filed using Free File.

"IRS.gov is one of the best resources available for helping taxpayers during the tax filing season," acting IRS Commissioner Bob Wenzel said. "It's always open, it's easy to use and it's ready to help with your taxes when you are."

IRS.gov is also the most available resource for finding tax forms and publications. By the end of February, taxpayers had downloaded 195 million files, which is 82 percent of the 236.6 million files downloaded all of last tax season from January to April 15. In addition to downloading, many of the most popular IRS forms can be filled out on-screen then printed.

Another top draw on the IRS Web site is the "e-News Subscriptions" page, which provides a single resource for subscribing to eight different IRS e-mail subscription lists. The "e-News Subscription" page is available from "The Newsroom" on IRS.gov. E-news subscriptions are available for IRS news releases, tax tips and several customer-focused lists including small business and tax professionals.

The IRS Web site sits at No. 2 on the Lycos 50 list and sits at No. 8 on the Yahoo! Buzz Index. Both the Lycos 50 and Yahoo! Buzz Index lists are based on the number of people who search each site for specific words or subjects.

Among other highlights for the 2003 filing season through the end of February:

- Self-prepared e-file returns are 6.2 million, a 30.6 percent increase from last year;
- Average refunds are \$2,136, a 2.2 percent increase from last year;
- Direct deposit refunds total \$62.8 billion, an 11.9 percent increase from last year.

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2003 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the week ending 3/1/02 and 2/28/03

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Individual Income Tax Returns			
Total Receipts	46,847,000	47,087,000	0.5
Total Processed	38,498,000	40,003,000	3.9
E-filing Receipts:			
TOTAL	28,208,000	30,669,000	8.7
TeleFile (phone)	2,901,000	2,736,000	- 5.7
Computer	25,307,000	27,933,000	10.4
Tax Professionals	20,534,000	21,700,000	5.7
Self-prepared	4,773,000	6,233,000	30.6
Refunds Certified:			
Number	35,195,000	36,907,000	4.9
Amount of principal	\$73.579 billion	\$78.826 billion	7.1
Average refund	\$2,091	\$2,136	2.2
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	22,988,000	25,586,000	11.3
Amount	\$56.133 billion	\$62.797 billion	11.9
Average	\$2,442	\$2,454	0.5